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479 HUNTINGTON AVENUE
BOSTON 15, MASSACHUSETTS

Nov. 10, 1954

NEWSLETTER NUMBER FOURTEEN

THE CENTER'S OFFICE AND STAFF IN CAIRO

Mr. William K. Simpson (Research Associate), Mr. Bernard V. Bothmer (Director), and Mrs. Bothmer (Administrative Officer) arrived in Alexandria on September 16 on board the Gumhuryat Misr, one of the new boats of the Khedivial Mail Line. En route to Egypt they were able to visit the Egyptian collections in the Museo Nazionale in Naples and in the Musée National Libanais in Beirut and to make an excursion to the Nahr el Kelb, north of Beirut, where since the times of Ramesses II conquerors and victors had left their inscriptions on the rocks overlooking one of the finest bays of the Mediterranean.

The new office of the Center is located in the Isis Building, sharia el Walda, Garden City, Cairo. The house lies opposite the American Embassy, and the entrance is on sharia Lazoghli, opposite the north wall of the British Embassy's garden. The office is on the fifth floor, apartment no. 32; the telephone number is Cairo 27076. The building lies within easy walking distance of the French Institute, the Institut d'Egypte, the Museum, and the Semiramis Hotel. The Fulbright Office (U.S. Educational Foundation in Egypt) is in the same block around the corner.

Mr. and Mrs. John Dimick arrived on October 17 and live now at the Semiramis Hotel in Garden City, Cairo. As reported in NL XIII, Mr. Dimick has been appointed Fellow of the Center in Cairo for 1954-55.

The staff of the Center made the usual courtesy calls, and some of the names may be of interest to members of the Center for future reference: Mr. Mustafa Amer (Director General of the Department of Antiquities), Mr. Abbas Bayoumi (Director of the Cairo Museum), Mr. Maurice Rafael (Chief Keeper of the Cairo Museum), Mr. Michel Cassab (Administrative Director of the Department of Antiquities), Dr. Pahor Kladios Labib (Director of the Coptic Museum), Professor E. E. Calverley (Vice-President of the Center and successor to Professor Jeffery at the School of Oriental Studies of the American University in Cairo), and the officers of the U.S. Information Service at the Embassy: Mr. William H. Weathersby (Public Affairs Officer and Head of U.S.I.S.), Mr. Daniel Oleksiw (Chief Information Officer), Dr. James M. Keys (Cultural Officer), and Mr. Herbert Madison (Assistant Cultural Officer).

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The staff was warmly received by Professor Ahmed Fakhry who, back from his year at Brown University, Providence, lives again in his house in the middle of the Western Cemetery at the Giza Pyramids. He is hard at work on his book on pyramids for Houghton, Mifflin, and on the preliminary reports on his excavation campaigns at Dahshour which will be published in the forthcoming volume of the Annales du Service des Antiquités de l'Egypte, but the hoped-for continuation of his dig has not yet materialized. His museum and store rooms, housing the finds of his recent excavations, are very well organized, and field diaries as well as object registers are kept with the minute care for which George A. Reisner and Cecil M. Firth set the example. It is interesting to note that Professor Fakhry discovered a number of New Kingdom burials at Dahshour which excel in the quality of small objects, such a toilet articles and ostraca with painted illustrations. They include a shell-shaped toilet dish of blue opaque glass in perfect preservation as well as a kohl pot in the form of the god Bes with the original stibium stick still in its holder on the deity's back.

Professor Selim Hassan, too, received the Center's staff for tea at his house on the Pyramids Road. He is now one of the two Egyptologists on the Council for Excavations in the Department of Antiquities, Ministry of Education; the other Egyptologist is Monsieur Charles Kuentz, former Director of the French Institute in Cairo. Professor Hassan continues the publication of the Giza excavations of the Egyptian University and also showed the page proofs of his report on the Saqqara excavations undertaken in the beginning of the War which include the now famous reliefs from the causeway of the Pyramid of Unas, last king of Dynasty V.

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THE U.S. EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION IN EGYPT

Since both Mr. Simpson and Mr. Bothmer have received grants for Egyptological research under the Fulbright Act they were privileged to participate in the orientation program designed to familiarize the 22 Fulbright students, teachers, and research scholars, most of them newcomers to the Nile Valley, with the many aspects of Egypt and Egyptian life. The esteem in which the Fulbright program is held in Egypt is best proved by the number of the government's top men who addressed the small group in person. Among them were the Minister of Interior, Lt. Col. Zakariah Mohieddine, and the Minister of Agriculture, Dr. Abdel Razzak Sedky; the latter spoke for nearly two hours in the auditorium of the Ministry and answered questions directed to him from the group. Professor Mohamed Shafik Ghorbal, Chairman of the Board of Directors of USEF/E, spoke on the recent development in Egypt's history and on the Revolution of 1952, and Dr. Mohammed Ahmed Selim, Secretary General of the Permanent Council for National Production, explained the new policy with regard to production. His address took place on the eve of his departure for Washington where he played a leading role in the negotiations for financing the projected high dam south of Assuan. Although this dam, when finished, will flood the Temple of Abusimbel, it will have an effect on many other monuments north of Assuan as well: the average level of the Nile will be much lower throughout the year which in turn will lower the subterranean water level with the result that the foundations of Karnak, Abydos, and many other sites are no longer endangered. If this lowering of the water level pertains to the Delta as well, the prospects for new excavations in many historical places in Lower Egypt will be good.

There were many other lectures on topical subjects by experts in the various field. Health, welfare, social problems, education, the role of Islam in contemporary Egypt, and the life of the Fellaheen were discussed. The United States Ambassador to Egypt, the Hon. Jefferson Caffery, addressed the group and a few days later entertained it at a large garden party which was attended by most members of the American colony. There were excursions by bus to the main sights in and near Cairo; villages were visited which show the present state of the farming population and the gradual change which the new social centers hope to effect which are being introduced all over Egypt, and tours were arranged through the attractive and well organized Coptic, Arab, and Agricultural Museums. A detention home for delinquent boys and the Juvenile Court of Cairo were shown to the group, and the officials in charge discussed with disarming frankness the many problems with which they have to cope. There is no doubt that a great change has taken place in Egypt, and one could not help but admire the sincerity and energy with which the new regime tackles the plight of millions of the country's underprivileged. Point Four (FOA) plays a great role in Egypt now, and its staff of experts numbers sixty Americans at present.

The Fulbright Office also arranged for a visit to Qubbeh Palace at Heliopolis, the private residence of the former king, and though the place with its vulgar splendor may be of interest as the prime example of a bygone era, the sum total of what is to be seen there left most of the visitors unmoved. The building and its contents are well cared for; the green telephones (all of them monitored in the past), the gadgets, uniforms, and personal files as well as the furnishings are still in place. Some of the art objects and precious had been sold at public auction during the past winter, but the collection of priceless Qur'an editions and manuscripts is still intact and was shown to a few Fulbright scholars, but the collection of Egyptian antiquities is inaccessible at present. On the final day of the orientation program Mr. Simpson and Mr. Bothmer were asked to conduct a tour of Saqqara for the group, for which the Fulbright Office generously provided two busses as well as box lunches. They began by climbing the Unas Pyramid, then descended the causeway and visited the tombs under it to the south, after the bend. The 'Bird Tomb' of Nefer-Her-N-Ptah, the entrance of which is half covered by the foundations of the causeway, is now easily accessible by means of solid steps built by the Antiquities Department. The group then crossed over to the Zoser gateway, toured the Step Pyramid complex, went to the mastaba of Mereruka, visited the tomb of Ty, and finally descended into the vaults of the Sacred Bulls which now have electric light throughout and even to the seasoned traveler remain one of the most impressive sights of Egypt. Lunch was taken on the terrace of Mariette's house where the group was joined by Judge Brinton, one of the Directors of the U.S. Educational Foundation in Egypt. The Judge, an old friend of the Center and its chief adviser in Egypt, has now retired from the Foreign Service, but continues many of his activities in the field of archaeology and of the humanities in general, which play an important part in improving American-Egyptian cultural relations.

The group then went on to the palm grove of Mitrahine to see the two colossi and other antiquities. It was hot, and the north wind was blowing, and the place was as dusty as it was one hundred years ago when Auguste Mariette and his friend Heinrich Brugsch camped there and commented unfavorably on its wind and dust and flies.

This short report on the Fulbright activities in Egypt, which also provide travel grants for 55 Egyptians to go to the U. S., would be incomplete without mentioning the able Executive Officer, Mr. Richard W. Downar, and his helpful and most congenial staff. They organized an excellent orientation program, and it is reassuring to experience at first hand how capably and tactfully this important phase of the cultural program of the United States is handled.

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FROM THE DIRECTOR'S REPORT DATED OCTOBER 21

The season has not yet gotten underway fully but more and more scholars, most of them Egyptologists, have arrived in Cairo who will soon resume the work interrupted by the summer recess. Dr. George R. Hughes, a Trustee of the Center, and Dr. Charles F. Nims, both of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, went immediately to Upper Egypt to reopen their headquarters at Luxor known as 'Chicago House.' At the French Institute are at present Mr. François Daumas who will shortly resume his work at the Temple of Dendera, Mr. Serge Sauneron who is preparing the first complete publication of the reliefs and inscriptions of the Temple of Esna, Father du Bourguet and Mr. Henri Wild. The latter continues to record the decorations of the tomb of Thiy and will begin work at Saqqara in about a week.

When Mr. and Mrs. John Dimick called on the Director General of the Department of Antiquities on October 18, Professor Mustafa Amer announced that on the previous day the Council has met and had made the following decisions: To grant an excavation permit to the Swiss Institute (Dr. H. Rieke) for work at the sun sanctuary of King Weserkaf between Abusir and Abu Gurab, to the University Museum of the University of Pennsylvania (Dr. R. Anthes) for a joint American-Egyptian dig at Mitrahine, and to the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago for clearance work in the tomb of Herkhuef in the Asasif at Western Thebes. He also mentioned that a generous appropriation had been made to continue the publication of the Catalogue Général des Antiquités égyptiennes du Musée du Caire. Thus the outlook for an active season is very good, considering that Professor Bryan W. Emery, of University College (London) will resume his excavations at Saqqara in December. He, incidentally, has been awarded the Norton Lectureship of the Archaeological Institute of America. He has accepted 36 engagements, beginning in New York on March 4, 1955, and ending in Boston on April 22. It should also be mentioned that the Egypt Exploration Society plans to send a recording team to Gebel Silsileh later this year and that Mr. Gutbub is already at work recording the Temple of Kom Ombo for eventual publication under the auspices of the French Institute.

Hardly any changes are noticeable in the Cairo Museum. The staff consists of Dr. Abbas Bayoumi, Director; Maurice Rafael, Chief Keeper; Abdel Hami Sayed and Abdel Qader Selim, Keepers. The Librarian is now Miss Dya el Ghazi, and the Administrative Assistant of the Museum is Gamal Selim. In the garden in front of the Museum a pond has been dug in recent years which displays three of the best known plants of Egyptian antiquity: papyrus, blue lotus, and white lotus.

The universities are not yet in session and no date has yet been set for their opening. It has been announced, however, that in the future there will be only one place at which Egyptology will be taught, namely at the University of Cairo (at Giza). Thus the Egyptologists of the universities of Alexandria and Heliopolis (formerly Ibrahim University, now Ain Shams) are being transferred to Cairo University, and plans have been mentioned of creating there a national Institute of Egyptology.

While Zakaria Goneim and Kamal el Mallakh are touring the United States, work at the unfinished Dynasty III pyramid at Saqqara has been discontinued, but at Giza preparations are being made to raise the blocks covering the eastern boat grave on the south side of the Cheops Pyramid. A huge timber scaffolding has been erected over the 42 limestone blocks forming the roof of this grave and is being roofed over so as to protect the site completely. A rolling crane, with block and tackle equipment, will be installed below the ceiling of the scaffolding for the removal of the blocks once the decision has been made to uncover the entire boat grave and to remove this boat. Meanwhile Dr. Zaki Iskander, the Chemist of the Cairo Museum, has gone to Europe with a sample of the boat's cedar wood and one of the acacia wood nails to obtain expert advice on the treatment and preservation of the boat and a large garage-like structure has been built directly south of the eastern end of the row of limestone ceiling blocks to serve as his laboratory. The chairman of the committee which supervises the work on this important excavation is Professor Abdel Moneim Abubakr, formerly of the University of Alexandria, now of Cairo University, while operations at the site are in the hands of Mr. Zaki Noor, Chief Inspector of the Giza Region. The rubble wall mentioned in Newsletter XIII, page 10, has now been studied more in detail. It rests on a mud bed of even thickness which, beyond the west end of the limestone blocks of the eastern boat grave, extends also below the facing blocks of one of the mastabas immediately to the south which is dated to Dynasty VI. Thus the rubble wall which partly covers the southern end of the limestone ceiling blocks of both boat graves definitely seems to antedate Dynasty VI and cannot date from Roman times. It is being mapped carefully before removal.

The surface of the twenty-third block of the eastern boat chamber bears on its southern part clearly the cartouche of King Radedef, thus removing any doubt as to the name on another block which is partly visible and on which there had been much speculation. Thus far only 8 years had been reported for Radedef, Cheops' successor, but the inscription of the eleventh regnal year, reported in the last Newsletter, is of the same style and in the same red ink as those with Radedef's name and thus appears to refer to him, and not to Chephren.

Several projects have been mentioned in connection with continued operations at Giza. One of them is to remove all debris on the west side of the Great Pyramid as far west as the first row of the Western Cemetery, while another plan concerns the search for the Valley Temple of Giza under the western outskirts of the village of Kafr es Samman. Meantime an important publication has appeared, dealing with the excavations of the University of Alexandria at Giza. It is entitled: The University of Alexandria; Faculty of Arts; Excavations at Giza, 1949-1950, by Prof. Dr. Abdel-Moneim Abu-Bakr. With a chapter on 'Brick Vaults and Domes in the Giza Necropolis' by Dr. Alexander Badawy, Cairo, Government Press, 1953 (37 x 24.6 cm., 143 pp. with 116 illus. some of which are in color, and 58 pls.). More volumes are to follow in due course.

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A REPORT ON THE KAMOSE STELA

Mr. William K. Simpson, Research Associate of the Center in Cairo, who is on leave of absence from the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, has had an opportunity to study the text of this historical stela, the discovery of which was briefly reported in Newsletter XIII, page 11. He points out that the following is a preliminary account on his part and that it may contain a few inaccuracies. For this reason as well as because we can bring his report for private circulation among the Center's members only, it is requested that no use be made of the material until after Dr. Labib Habachi's article on the stela has been published.

"One of the most interesting discoveries in this annus mirabilis of Egyptology is the Kamose stela found earlier this summer in front of the second pylon at Karnak. It is to be published by Dr. Labib Habashi, to whom the Center is grateful for permission to give our members a brief description. It was found as a reused block supporting a statue, and came to light when measures were being taken to protect the statue from leaning.

"The stela consists of a text dealing with the expulsion of the Hyksos king Apopi by Wadj-kheper-Re Kamose. A text relating to the same subject has up to now been our chief source of contemporary information about this event. This is the so-called Carnarvon Tablet, published in JEA 3 and again in JEA 5. To understand the new text it is essential to describe their probable relation. There were a few scholars who doubted the historicity of the Carnarvon Tablet, but their view was emphatically disproved by the discovery in 1935 of two fragments of a stela, reused in the third pylon at Karnak, which proved to be the original from which the Carnarvon Tablet was copied. This stela, which we will call Kamose Stela I, was mentioned by Chevrier in his report in ASAE 35 and published by Lacau in ASAE 39. Although it was fortunate that the fragments proved beyond question the value of the Carnarvon Text as a contemporary source, it was unfortunate that the Carnarvon text was a copy of precisely that part of the stela which is represented by the fragments. The new stela, which we will call Kamose Stela II, begins in the middle of a narrative and ends with a description of the celebrations following the victory. Since Stela I begins with a logical opening formula, a date and titulary, and since the carving of the two stelae is almost identical and may represent the work of a single artisan, it seems almost inevitable that Stela II is a continuation of Stela I. If this is indeed the case, the stelae were probably set up at Karnak as a pair, thus emphasizing the importance of the long continuous text.

"The narrative of Stela II begins, as I have mentioned, in medias res, and describes the maneuvering preliminary to the capture of a region near Avaris. Details of the crossing of the river and the 'order of battle' are given. Some of the interesting side-lights are the appearance of Apopi on the scene for a moment, his wife looking at the oncoming Egyptians, and the citizens looking out from apertures on the top of their walls like the offspring of young animals in their lairs crying out at an attack. A description of the plundering is given, the cutting down of the trees, the setting fire to the houses, and the placing of the women in the holds of the ships. There follows an account of the produce of Rethenu on board three hundred ships of fine coniferous timber.

"A highly interesting section follows, perhaps the most important, dealing with the interception of a messenger travelling from Avaris to Kush by way of the Oasis route. He carries dispatches containing a reproachful letter from Apopi to the ruler of Kush in which Apopi suggests, however, that they become allies and join forces against the Egyptian with the understanding that they will divide the towns of Egypt between them!

"The text continues with a description of the successes of the Egyptians, the triumphant return to Thebes of the army, after passing through Siut at the time of the inundation, and the celebration of the victory at Thebes. The last few lines give the titles of the individual who is represented in the lower left hand corner of the stela. His identity and significance can best be discussed when the stela is published.

"From the earlier known section of the narrative, we knew that the power of the Hyksos extended as far south as Hermopolis and that the Egyptians were secure in their part of Egypt as far north as Cusae and as far south as Elephantine, where the Kushite sphere of power began. Between Cusae and Hermopolis there must have been a no-man's land. Reference to the Hyksos hold on Hermopolis is also made in the new stela. Action takes place in the Cynopolite nome, which with its capital, Kasa, is mentioned. The Cynopolite nome must have been one of the main strong points seized by the Egyptians in their northward advance into Hyksos territory. Mention is also made of the sending of men to Djesdjes, the Oasis of Bahariyah, to secure the rear of the Egyptians who were encamped in the Cynopolite nome.

"A point of great interest is the occurrence of the prenomen of Apopi, a name borne by several Hyksos kings. Unlike the names of Kamose, which are enclosed in a cartouche whenever they appear, the name of the Hyksos king is written without cartouche and is determined by the sign of the man with blood streaming from his head, a determinative reserved for the enemy. In that part of the stela in which the letter of Apopi to the ruler of Kush is quoted, Apopi's fuller names and titles are given, to enhance the fact that this was indeed an actual letter. Here he is called the chieftain (heka) of Avaris 'Aa-user-Re (?), Son of Re, Apopi. The effort made by the author of the narrative to avoid referring to Apopi as a king is somewhat defeated by the use of the title 'Son of Re.' Unfortunately, the prenomen in the text is damaged, but the traces suggest 'Aa-user-Re to me, although I may be mistaken.

"As this report is being written, Egypt is celebrating the signing of the Suez agreement between Great Britain and the government, and this is interpreted as the end of foreign domination. It seems appropriate that the discovery of the stela commemorating the expulsion of the Hyksos should be made in the year of a much friendlier but similar event."

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EXCAVATIONS AT MEMPHIS BY THE DEPARTMENT OF ANTIQUITIES OF EGYPT AND THE UNIVERSITY MUSEUM OF THE UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA

Dr. Rudolf Anthes, Curator of the Egyptian Department in The University Museum of the University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, writes of the excavations, of which he will be Field Director, to be resumed at Memphis, a site which The University Museum began to investigate some forty years ago.

"The excavations will be conducted with Egyptian and American funds, equipment, and scholarship. Work will start in February, 1955, to the west of the well-known sightseeing attractions in the palm grove of Mitrahine,- the two colossi and the alabaster sphinx,- at the spot which, according to Petrie (Memphis I pl. I), represents the southwest corner of the precincts of the Ptah temple. At this point, near Kom el Fakhry, several monuments have been discovered during the last few decades, namely, chapels of three Rameside kings; tomb structures of the ruling family during the Twenty-second Dynasty; and the embalmment building of the Apis bulls dating to about the same time. The aim of the excavation is to clear this area and its surroundings and presumably to proceed first of all eastward in the general direction of the main southern entrance.

The construction of this area apparently originates within the period from the Empire to the Ptolemies. The finding of the embalment house suggests the possibility that other Apis buildings were nearer to this spot than we used to think they were. This question will be cleared up in the process of excavating. The staff will include Mr. Henry G. Fischer and Mr. John Dimmick on the part of the Americans; it is hoped that some young Egyptian scholars will join us from the very beginning, who will be selected by the Egyptian Department of Antiquities and Ain Shams University in Cairo. The proceedings of the joint excavation, which is planned as a project for furthering mutual understanding, will be reported in this NEWSLETTER from time to time.

"The Egypt Exploration Society has very kindly permitted Mr. Fischer to participate for two months, before our own work starts, in the excavations conducted by Mr. Bryan W. Emery in the archaic cemetery at Saqqara."

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TWENTY-THIRD INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF ORIENTALISTS

Mr. Dows Dunham, a Trustee and Vice-President of the Center and a member of its Executive Committee, is Curator of the Egyptian Department at the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston. He has written the following note on the International Congress of Orientalists which he attended last August in Cambridge, England.

"The Center was well represented at the Congress which was held in Cambridge from August 21 to 28, 1954. Bernard V. Bothmer, our current Field Director, Mr. John D. Cooney, Mr. Dows Dunham, Mr. William C. Hayes, and Professor Richard A. Parker, our Membership Secretary, took part, together with about 90 others of many nationalities in the section on Egyptology, the first of eleven sections covering Egypt, Africa, Turkey, the Middle and Far East, with a total registered membership of nearly 800 scholars. The majority of those attending were housed and catered for in the various colleges of the University, an arrangement made possible by the fact that the Congress took place out of term. Two of our members read papers at the Congress: Professor Parker on his studies of a papyrus in the Brooklyn Museum, and Mr. Bothmer on his current research into Egyptian Sculpture of the Late Period, a project which he hopes to find time to advance during his stay in Egypt as Field Director. It is pleasant to be able to report that his statement of the aims of and current progress on this study elicited very favorable public comment and support from a number of foreign colleagues after his talk. The Congress, in addition to the opportunity of hearing papers on a variety of subjects, afforded valuable occasions for contact and informal discussion with our colleagues of various nationalities including a good representation of Egyptians in the fields of Coptic and Islamic studies as well as Egyptology. These contacts were both pleasant and valuable. In particular it was possible to obtain useful background information on the recent discoveries at Giza, Saqqara, Abydos, and Thebes, about which Mr. Hayes reported in the Newsletter of September 3. As a result of personal conversation with Mr. Hayes, with Mr. Ghoneim of the Egyptian Department of Antiquities, and with M. Jean-Philippe Lauer who has been working at Saqqara during the past season, the problems awaiting solution at these sites and the difficulties attending the work in prospect were made apparent, and one came away with an impression that thorough realization of the importance of the work and of the difficulties attending its execution on the part of those on the spot gave promise that the excavations would be carried forward with competence and care."

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EGYPTIAN EGYPTOLOGISTS ON TOUR IN THE UNITED STATES

The following note has been prepared by Mr. William Stevenson Smith, a Trustee of the Center and its resident Director in Cairo during 1951-52. He is Assistant Curator of the Egyptian Department at the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston.

"Mr. Kamal el Mallakh, the discoverer of the Sun Boat beside the Great Pyramid at Giza, and Dr. Zakaria Ghoneim, who found the new Third Dynasty Pyramid at Saqqara, have been making an extensive tour of this country. They were accompanied by five members of the Egyptian Department of Tourism and arrived in New York for the opening of the new Egyptian State Tourist Office at 630 Fifth Avenue on October 7. The Encyclopedia Americana, in conjunction with the Grolier Society, gave a dinner for them on the sixth at the Harvard Club, with the former Director of the Center, Arthur Jeffery, presiding. A luncheon was arranged for the party by William C. Hayes at the Metropolitan Museum which was attended by His Excellency the Egyptian Ambassador Mahmoud Azmi.

"The party visited Boston on October 11 and, at the request of the Office of the Harvard University Marshal, William Stevenson Smith took them to visit the University and the Egyptian Collection of the Boston Museum of Fine Arts where they were accompanied around the galleries by the Acting Director, Henry Rossiter. They were received at the Fogg Museum by its Director, John Coolidge, by the President of the Center, Edward Forbes, and by its Acting Secretary, Ashton Sanborn. In the evening, films of the new Egyptian excavations were shown at a reception at the Hotel Statler."

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A DESERT TRIP TO SAQQARA

Oldtimers smile somewhat disdainfully when newcomers climb on the gaily bedecked camels waiting at the end of the Pyramids Road near Mena House and set out for the obligatory trip round the Pyramids and the Sphinx and have their picture taken on a mount which is usually called 'Daisy.'

There is, however, an experience which few who have made it will ever forget, and that is a long camel ride through the desert under a full moon. On October 12 a group of some 15 young Americans and British set out to do just this, and they invited Mr. and Mrs. Bothmer to participate in their venture. The party left from the end of the streetcar line at 3 p.m. and, passing between the Second Pyramid and the now deserted site of Harvard Camp, cut into the desert in the general direction of Saqqara, some 9 miles to the south. Though the sun sets around 5:30 at this time of the year it was still rather warm, and in the afternoon light the yellow of the sand and the brown of the Old Kingdom structures appeared brighter than they do in the frequent daytime haze. The desert is by no means an even stretch of smooth sand. There are rock formations to be circumvented, and the small wadis which run down to the Nile Valley have to be crossed. The first site to be visited was that of the large unfinished royal tomb of Dynasty III attributed to King Neferka on which attention has been focused once more by the paper read by M. J.-P. Lauer at the XXIIIrd International Congress of Orientalists last August ('Pyramides à degrés, monuments typiques de la IIIe dynastie égyptienne; Lauer, however, attributes this tomb to Dynasty IV). The site, known locally as 'Keessa,' lies above the village of Zawiet el Aryan from which this region of the desert takes its name. The tomb, originally excavated early in the century, has partly been cleared again last year by a

movie company which used it for the film 'The Land of the Pharaohs' for which William Faulkner wrote the script. The group descended the long sloping passage to the bottom of the chamber, the floor of which lies some 70 feet below the bed rock of the desert, but much sand has drifted in again and only one corner of the huge granite sarcophagus was visible. The entrance walls, incidentally, have been strengthened recently with brickwork so that the crumbling rock will not cave in for some time to come. The party remounted and crossed the traces of what must have been a large British encampment during World War II. Just then the sun went down, and for nearly half an hour an eerie twilight gave the desert landscape a strange and unreal appearance. By the time Abu Gurab was reached the moon had risen, but as it was still low above the eastern horizon the visit to the sun sanctuary of Ne-user-ra did not reveal much beyond the mass of the masonry obelisk and the large alabaster offering basins strewn about the vast courtyard. To one who has been there in broad daylight the place looks much larger in the darkness than it actually is. Then, at a long steady trot, the Abusir Pyramids were reached after another hour, but nobody was eager to dismount again and so the party continued on its way to Saqqara. Since the moon seemed to rise rapidly, the Step Pyramid soon became visible, and yet its outline did not become clear until the riders reached the Serapeum district. The approach to Saqqara from the northeast is very beautiful; the ground falls away rapidly after one leaves the Pyramids of Abusir, then rises gradually toward Mariette's House which, reconstructed and furnished with a terrace, serves as the picnic place where in daytime parties eat their box lunches and soft drinks can be purchased. Here the somewhat weary riders (none of whom had recently undertaken such a long trip on camel back) dismounted, and sat down to supper, surrounded by the Antiquities Department guards who seemed to appear from nowhere. The view toward the north was splendid and by now the moonlight was very bright. A few climbed down into the large hole, only about 30 feet from the northeast corner of the Rest House, which was dug in recent years in order to re-examine the statues of Greek philosophers and statesmen and poets which Auguste Mariette had found just about a century ago. They were erected at the behest of one of the Ptolemies in the third century B.C. at the site of the ancient Serapeum, directly next to the sacred avenue which leads to the graves of the Apis Bulls. These figures, placed in a hemicycle, have now lost their heads and appear much damaged, but the eloquence of Hellenistic form and composition presents, strangely enough, no contrast to the simple straight lines of nearby Egyptian monuments. There life-size statues, made of native limestone, testify to the veneration in which the site was held by the Greeks and link the Nile Valley to the civilization of the Mediterranean world.

Shortly after 8 p.m. when the cold light of the night became brighter and brighter, the party remounted and returned to Abusir, leaving the Archaic cemeteries with their streets and low mastabas on the right. At the Pyramid of King Neferirkara of Dynasty V they rode straight into one of the large side rooms of the precinct on the south side, lined up their camels, got off once more and toured the temple. Though details in the shadow of the roofed chambers were not too well visible, every part of the masonry could be studied easily which was exposed to moonlight, and the white of the limestone pavement and walls formed a strange contrast to the undefinable tone values of ancient brickwork, sandstone blocks, and desert. Then came the ride back to Giza, and for long stretches the group followed the demarcation line between the sand hills and the cultivated land of the valley which, at least in this region, has hardly changed by more than a few yards in the

last five thousand years. Shortly after midnight the village of Kafr es Samman, at the foot of the Giza Pyramids, was reached. There were a few cars in the streets, electric light came from open doors and windows, and the spell was broken which everyone had felt, at one time or another, during the seven hours on camelback. As a sober after-thought it was observed by most that the stirrups with which these camel saddles are furnished as a concession to Western habits are not practical except perhaps on short tourist trips around the Giza cemeteries when a man leads the animal by the guide rope. To cross the legs in Arab fashion around the saddle horn and to recross them from time to time changes the seat and relaxes the body, and by slightly shifting the weight frequently the rider soon learns to follow the movement of the sure-footed animal.

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CAIRO IMPRESSIONS - OCTOBER 1954

To one who has not been to Cairo for four years the city appears much changed. Tremendous building activities are in evidence everywhere in the new as well as in the old quarters of town. The south side of the Midan el Tahrir (formerly Midan el Ismailiya) is dominated by a huge office building occupied by various government departments whose crescent-shaped front and arcaded entrance give it the aspect of a big hotel. Sheppard's is of course no longer; its site is now a parking lot. But in the block south of the Semiramis the foundations and basement of the new Sheppard Hotel are already under construction. The east wall of the Cairo Museum's garden has been moved so that the Sharia Mariette Pacha has almost doubled in width. The Quasr el Nil barracks have disappeared; they will be replaced by the Nile Hotel for which the ground is just being leveled, and a "corniche" follows the river from Boulaq past the Semiramis and the British Embassy which thus has lost its access to the Nile. Traffic is heavier than ever; the number of taxis seems to have tripled and in Garden City, Dokki, and Zamalek the horse-drawn open arabiyah is hardly ever seen. Yet in the older quarters the street life is as colorful and noisy as before, though it may be observed that one is rarely accosted by beggars.

The river has reached its highest level in half a century, many basements are flooded and the piers of the Quasr el Nil bridge have disappeared in the rapid swirl of the muddy water. The road to Meadi now forms the bank of the river in many places. A few farm houses stick out of the flood like islands and their mud brick walls will dissolve if the river does not subside soon. There is much talk that this amount of inundation is detrimental to agriculture throughout the country except in the new Mudiriya west of Alexandria where 50,000 acres have been reclaimed and are now under cultivation.

Streetcar No. 14 still takes one for \$.04 to Mena House, but there is now a direct bus (no. 8) which runs from the American University to the Giza Pyramids. The trip costs \$.10 and streetcar service will soon be discontinued on the Pyramids Road.

Some streets and squares have been renamed since the Revolution and Qubbeh Palace, Prince Muhammad Ali's Palace, and Abdine Palace are now partly accessible to the public. The latter contains in its northern part the residence of the President of the Republic; the southern part harbors a café, and the swimming pool which has been opened to the public.

An innovation in Cairo is the Tourist Police who speak English and French and seem to be omnipresent. Not only do they give directions, but if they can get someone to relieve them escort strangers to their destination.

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